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ABSTRACT

This book presents information from a 1999 survey that asked teachers nationwide about stressors in their teaching situation, how they handled the stressors, and specific times they felt the most joy in teaching. Part 1, "Teachers' Lives," highlights: the teachers' own words about centering and balancing; the joys of teaching; school community; students and parents; standards and testing; searching for balance; and taking time for themselves. Part 2, "Reflecting and Taking Action," explores specific strategies for achieving balance in teachers' personal and professional lives, which include: clarifying the present situation; using the joys of childhood play and personal literacy experiences as mirrors for discovering one's own interests and attitudes; naming principles of living and exploring one's own spirituality; and taking action by writing mission statements and taking time for one's self. Throughout this section are reflection questions with writing activities to help teachers set priorities and stick to them. The book ends with a bibliography of resources that teachers have found helpful in their quest for fulfillment. E-mail letters sent to teachers to collect this information are appended. (SM)